

TAB

LECTURE OUTLINE

STRATEGY AND TACTICS: The United Front

CONTENTS:

<u>CHAPTER:</u>	<u>PAGE:</u>
I. Introduction	1
II. Importance of the United Front	1
III. United Front Tactics	2
IV. The Tasks of United Front	3
V. Forms of U.F.	4
VI. United Front and Youth Movement	5
VII. United Front and Women's Movement	6
APPENDIX I. New "Tactical Line"	6
APPENDIX II. Coalition Tactics	9
APPENDIX III. Non-Violence	10

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LECTURE OUTLINE

STRATEGY AND TACTICS: The United Front (UF)

I. Introduction

A. "The three heads of Government consider that the eastern frontier of Poland should follow the Curzon line, with digressions from it in some regions of five to eight kilometers in favor of Poland. They recognize that Poland must receive substantial accessions of territory in the north and west.

They feel that the opinion of the new Polish Provisional Government of National Unity should be sought in due course on the extent of these accessions and that the final delineation of the western border should thereafter await the peace conference."

(From the official text on the YALTA Conference released by the White House in Feb 1945)

B. "According to the theory of Marxism-Leninism the Party is considered as the LEADING FORCE in the COUNTRY, which has its specific program and which CANNOT MERGE with non-Party masses.

In Yugoslavia, on the contrary, the PEOPLE'S FRONT is considered the CHIEF LEADING FORCE and there was an attempt to get the PARTY SUBMERGED within the FRONT. Comrade Tito said "Does the CPY have other programs? but that of the PEOPLE'S FRONT? No, the CPY has no other program of the PEOPLE'S FRONT IS ITS PROGRAM."

(From: Letter of the C.C. VKP (b) to Comrade Tito and other members of the C.C. of YCP. March 27, 1948)

II. The Importance of the United Front

A. The success of the whole struggle of the proletariat is closely bound up with the establishing a fighting alliance between the proletariat, on the one hand, and the toiling peasantry and the basic mass of the urban petty bourgeoisie, who together form the majority of the population, i.e. the formation of a wide, popular anti-Fascist Front on the basis of the proletarian UNITED FRONT.

WE MUST TURN THE WEAPON AGAINST THOSE WHO WIELD IT, and show the working people, artisans, and intellectuals whence the danger threatens.

1. This, (the heterogeneous social composition of parties and organizations) obliges the CP to approach the DIFFERENT ORGANIZATIONS in different ways, taking into consideration that not infrequently the bulk of the membership does not know anything about the real political character of its leadership.

2. But regardless of whether or not there is any chance of attracting these parties and organizations as a whole to the People's Front, CP tactics must under all circumstances be directed toward drawing the small peasants, artisans, handicraftsmen, etc.

B. Imperialism (Capitalism, Fascism) can be prevented from retaining power and can be overthrown by forming:

1. A UNITED FRONT (People's Front, National Unity Front, Fatherland Front, etc.) which calls for:
2. Unity of Action (Joint Action) of the proletariat on Local District, Regional, National and World-wide (international) scale is a weapon which renders the working class capable not only of successful defense but also of successful counterattack against the class opposition.

This action of parties concerned is exerting

(a) powerful influence on the ranks of the Catholic, Anarchist and unorganized workers,

(b) on all strata of the working people, peasantry, the urban petty bourgeoisie and intelligentsia.

(c) inspire the wavering groups with faith in the strength of the working class

(d) rely on the STEADILY GROWING STRENGTH of the PROLETARIAN STATE, THE LAND OF SOCIALISM THE USSR.

3. The establishment of UNITY OF ACTION is necessary even before the majority of the working class is united in the struggle for the overthrow of capitalism and the victory of the proletarian revolution.

4. THERE ARE NO CONDITIONS FOR UNITY OF ACTION EXCEPT ONE (AND THAT ELEMENTARY CONDITION ACCEPTABLE FOR ALL WORKERS) that the Unity of Action be directed against Imperialism (Fascism) against the offensive of Capital, against the threat of war, against the class enemy.

III. United Front Tactics

United Front tactics, the chief object of which in the opinion of the Comintern, is the ESTABLISHMENT of the UNITY of all workers in their struggle

against Capitalism the Unity of their MILITANT ACTION, are the tactics of irreconcilable struggle against the main obstacle in that struggle.

In adopting these tactics the COMMUNIST RESERVE TO THEMSELVES THE UNLIMITED RIGHT TO EXPOSE the Coopting opposition even at the time of joint action; and to carry out these tactics primarily in the form of a UNITED FRONT FROM BELOW.

(From "Outline History of the Communist International" publ.

Cooperative Publishing Society of Foreign Workers, Moscow 1934)

(Note: See also : DECISIONS OF THE VII CONGRESS OF THE COMINTERN (1935)
(Stencil #5.)

IV. The Tasks of the United Front are as follows:

A. the defense of the immediate economic and political interests of the working class.

B. the defense against fascism (the starting point and main content of the United Front in all capitalist countries)

C. the establishment of the widest UNITED FRONT with the aid of joint action by the workers, organizations of different trends for the defense of the vital interests of the toiling masses, which means:

1. joint struggle really to shift the burden of the consequences of the crisis onto the shoulders of the ruling classes, etc.

2. joint struggle against ALL FORMS of the FASCIST OFFENSIVE, in defense of the gains and the rights of the toilers, against the destruction of bourgeois democratic liberties;

3. Joint struggle against the approaching danger of IMPERIALIST WAR, a struggle that will make preparation of such a war more difficult.

D. preparing the working class for a RAPID CHANGE in forms and methods of struggle when there is change in the situation.

E. Preparing the transition from DEFENSIVE to the OFFENSIVE against capital

F. steering (the masses) toward the ORGANIZATION OF A MASS POLITICAL STRIKE.

G. striving for both short-term and long-term agreements that provide for JOINT ACTION with parties, Trade Unions, and other ORGANIZATIONS OF THE TOILERS against the Class Enemies of the proletariat.

H. stressing the DEVELOPMENT OF MASS ACTION LOCALLY, carried out by the local CP organizations through LOCAL AGREEMENTS.

I. and by doing so NOT ABANDONING their own (CP) independent work of Communist education, organization, and MOBILIZATION OF THE MASSES.

J. appealing to the MASSES DIRECTLY against any sabotage of joint action on the part of persons and organizations participating in the United Front.

V. Forms of U.F.

A. The practical realization of the UNITED FRONT takes various forms in various countries depending upon:

1. the condition and character of workers organizations
2. their political level
3. situation in the particular country, and
4. changes in progress in the international labor movement, etc.

B. These forms may include:

1. coordinated joint action of the workers to be agreed upon from case to case on definite occasions, individual demands or on the basis of a common platform;
2. coordinated action in individual enterprises, or by whole industry;
3. coordinated action on a LOCAL, REGIONAL, NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL scale;
4. coordinated action for the ORGANIZATION OF ECONOMIC STRUGGLE of the workers carrying out MASS POLITICAL ACTIONS
5. coordinated action for the ORGANIZATION OF JOINT SELF-DEFENSE against FASCIST ATTACKS
6. coordinated action in rendering aid to political prisoners and their families
7. coordinated action in the field of STRUGGLE AGAINST SOCIAL REACTION

8. joint action in the DEFENSE OF THE INTERESTS OF THE YOUTH AND WOMEN COOPERATIVE MOVEMENT, Cultural Activity, Sports, etc.

9. organization of CONTACT COMMITTEES from the parties and organizations participating in the UNITED FRONT

10. formation of elected (or selected) CLASS BODIES OF THE UNITED FRONT chosen irrespectively of party, among unemployed, the small townsfolk and villages;

C. Only such bodies are able to include also in the UNITED FRONT MOVEMENT the VAST MASSES OF UNORGANIZED TOILERS, are able to assist in DEVELOPING MASS INITIATIVE in the struggle against the capitalist offensive of FASCISM AND REACTION and on this basis create the necessary BROAD ACTIVE RANK AND FILE OF THE UNITED FRONT, and train hundreds and thousands of non-party masses in the capitalist countries.

The creation of non-partisan class bodies, is the best form for carrying out, extending and strengthening the United Front from among the rank and file of the masses.

These bodies are likewise the best bulwark against any attempt of the opponents of the United Front to disrupt the established Unity of Action of the working class.

VI. United Front and the Youth Movement

The Communist League of Youth Movement is not a Communist Party of the Youth.

The main task of the CLY Movement in capitalistic countries is to advance boldly in the direction of bringing about the UNITED FRONT along the path of organizing and uniting the young generation of working people. (France and USA)

The Young Communist League Movement;

1. strives in every way to unite the forces of all non-fascist MASS ORGANIZATIONS OF THE YOUTH.

2. strives against the militarization of the youth

3. strives for the economic and cultural rights of the Young Generation.

4. etc.

VII. United Front and the Women's Movement

Taking into account the concrete situation in each instance, the CP must find a way of mobilizing the WIDE MASSES OF WOMEN by work around their vital interests and demands such as:

1. fight against high prices
2. fight for higher wages on the basis of principle of equal pay for equal work
3. fight against mass dismissals
4. fight against every manifestation of inequality in the status of women and against FASCIST ENSLAVEMENT.
5. etc.

APPENDIX I. The "New Tactical Line"

A. The New Tactical Line of the WORLD COMMUNIST MOVEMENT, in its fight for peace, democracy, and Socialism began to take definite shape at the 7th Congress of the Comintern, held in July 1935, in which the CP of USA participated ;

B. Considering the profound role that this anti-fascist policy was to play in the ensuing years, RIGHT DOWN to this very court trial, the 7th Congress of the Comintern ranks definitely as one of the most important international meetings of recent times. The CP USA at times and affiliate of the Comintern, took full part in the 7th Congress and GAVE THE NEW UNITED FRONT, anti-fascist tactics FULLEST SUPPORT:

C. After the USSR got into the war, in June 1941, the NEW COMMUNIST anti-fascist TACTICS, INITIATED by the 7th Congress of the Comintern and expanded to meet the war conditions caused by the fascists, actually got into effective, successful operation;

D. It was this great NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL anti-Hitler combination, based on the 7th Congress, THAT FINALLY WON THE WAR:

E. It was during World War II period, in 1943, that the Communist International was dissolved. That this important step was taken indicated to what profound extent the Communist policy had changed under the new conditions in the world-wide struggle against the fascist danger.

THE COMINTERN WAS LIQUIDATED for at least two major reasons:

1. Because the mere fact of its existence was being seized upon by reactionaries as a pretext to disrupt WORLD DEMOCRATIC UNITY;
2. Because its centralized form no longer corresponded to world Communist needs.

F. With the end of World War II, the Communist anti-fascist tactics entered a new phase of application, again with modifications but always animated by the fight for democracy, peace and socialism. THIS WAS THE CONTINUATION INTO THE POSTWAR CONDITIONS of the line of the 7th Congress of the Comintern, which had achieved such a brilliant success in the great war against fascism. That is, WHEN THE WAR WAS CONCLUDED, THE WORLD DEMOCRATIC FORCES CARRIED OVER INTO THE POSTWAR PERIOD ESSENTIALLY THE SAME GENERAL POLICY of anti-fascist unity THAT THEY HAVE BEEN DEVELOPING BEFORE THE DURING THE GREAT WAR. They did this in the setting of a WORLD-WIDE UPSURGE OF MASSES AND NATIONS, who were determined to put into peace the DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES fought for in the war, and who were resolved to make a RESURGENCE OF FASCISM FOREVER IMPOSSIBLE.

G. On the International Field, the UNITED FRONT UNITY against the fascist nations took shape in the postwar period THROUGH THE FORMATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS. In accordance with the will of the great postwar WORLD-WIDE DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT generally and in harmony with COMMUNIST UNITED FRONT anti-fascist policy, naturally the USSR was an ardent founder of the United Nations.

H. At the end of World War II the situation in all countries of Europe that had been occupied by Hitler troops presented a peculiarly favorable opportunity for a RELATIVELY RAPID and PEACEFUL ADVANCE of the PEOPLE a TOWARD DEMOCRACY AND SOCIALISM. Those capitalist reactionaries, who had treasonously lined up almost solidly with Hitler during the war, found themselves largely disarmed and disoriented by the latter's defeat.

I. World War II, therefore, WAS NOT ONLY AN INTERNATIONAL WAR, BUT ALSO A CIVIL WAR. Thus, the shattering of the CAPITALIST STATE MACHINERY which Marx, Lenin, and Stalin HAD LONG BEFORE LAID DOWN AS A CONDITION for the successful socialist revolution HAVE BEEN LARGELY ACCOMPLISHED by the peoples during the course of the great anti-fascist war.

J. It was in this situation of extensive capitalist disorganization that the peoples of Europe SET ABOUT REORGANIZING their economic and political life and the end of World War II.

K. In this effort the UNDERGROUND RESISTANCE MOVEMENTS, in which the Communists had everywhere played the LEADING ROLE continued as the most important force;

L. Coming out in the OPEN, IN FULL STRUGGLE against the fascist armies, they PROCEEDED, with VICTORY FINALLY WON, TO ORGANIZE NEW GOVERNMENTS ALL OVER THE CONTINENT. These were NEW TYPE NATIONAL UNITY COALITION Governments, with COMMUNIST PARTICIPATION and Organized LARGELY UPON COMMUNIST INITIATIVE. They were composed of all the parties of a DEMOCRATIC TREND or that had taken more or less part in the underground resistance movements; including Communists, Socialists, Peasants, and Catholic Parties, and seven some parties of smaller capitalist states. France, Italy, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Rumania, Hungary, Albania and various other countries established such UNITED FRONT, MULTI-PARTY GOVERNMENTS.

M. Germany, too, would have surely taken this course had it not been allowed to set up a NATIONAL GOVERNMENT.

N. In several colonial and semicolonial lands, notably China, Burma, Korea, Indonesia, etc., the SURGING NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENTS also took on this general character of ALL-ROUND UNITED FRONT, anti-fascist combinations;

O. In the same period, the first couple of years after the war's end there was also a tremendous growth of DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENTS of all sorts in many parts of the world.

P. During these years the WFTU, WTDY, AND WIDF and other Mass organizations were formed.

Q. This tremendous POSTWAR UNITED FRONT, anti-fascist democratic development, both in national and international aspects, flowed along the broad general line foreseen by the Communists as far back as the 7th Congress of the Comintern, and THEY EVERYWHERE GAVE IT THEIR HEARTIEST SUPPORT.

R. This whole vast LEGAL and PEACEFUL COALITION MOVEMENT represented FUNDAMENTALLY THE COMMUNIST NEW TACTICAL LINE OF ACTION IN THE POSTWAR PERIOD.

S. The nations of NEW DEMOCRACIES in Central Eastern Europe had accomplished National People's Revolutions. The People's Democracy is a type of government which is moving toward Socialism. This reality embodies some of the profoundest aspects of the present day political line of Communism.

T. "We must find an ITALIAN WAY to the creating of democracy of the new type which opens the way to Socialism" --Togliatti, Cominform Jan 1948.

"We regard the PEOPLE'S FRONT AS THE MOST APPROPRIATE MOVEMENT toward strengthening democracy and Socialism in our conditions" -- Dimitrov --"The New Europe" page 95

These leaders were here speaking NOT OF FUNDAMENTALS OF SOCIALISM, but of STRATEGY AND TACTICS EMPLOYED IN ARRIVING AT SOCIALISM.

This flexibility in COMMUNIST STRATEGY AND TACTICS ARE EXPRESSED IN THE NEW TACTICAL LINE OF THE COMMUNIST MOVEMENT in general, including UNITED FRONT anti-fascist movements and the new People's Democracies, was long ago FORESHADOWED by Lenin who said:

"But while the working class movement is everywhere passing through what is practically the same preparatory school for victory over the bourgeoisie, it is in each country achieving this development in its own way."

Lenin-"Left-Wing Communism" page 72

APPENDIX II COALITION TACTICS

After the German attack upon the USSR in June 1941 the "Imperialist War" became a war of "freedom and democracy". National Fronts became the slogans of the period. Under different names National Fronts were organized in almost all enemy occupied countries.

Italy -- Committee of National Liberation

Greece -- National Liberation Front (EAM)

Yugoslavia -- Anti-Fascist Council of National Liberation (AVNO)

Albania, Bulgaria -- Fatherland Front

Poland -- National Unity Front

SECRET

Thanks to better cohesion, better discipline and more experience in underground organization and guerrilla warfare, the CP's acquired a predominant position in most resistance movements although their numbers were often smaller than those of the non-Communist underground and guerrilla fighters.

During the resistance period Communists strengthened their parties, acquired in many countries a **MILITARY ORGANIZATION**, and found themselves in possession of large stocks of arms and ammunition partly taken from the enemy, partly sent to them by the Allies. As a result of Soviet Military victories, the victorious Russians put power into the **HANDS OF A COALITION GOVERNMENT** composed of representatives of the groups which had participated in the anti-Nazi National Fronts during the war.

The main feature of these coalition governments was the **OCCUPATION BY A COMMUNIST OF THE POST OF MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR:**

1. who in most countries has direct control over the police
2. having acquired full control of the police, the Communist proceeded to the second phase of development, the weakening, through arrests and threats, of non-Communist members of the coalition showing signs of independence 1946-1947;
3. The third phase was characterized by structural reorganization of the state, and the consolidation of political Communist monopoly. The appearances of the coalition were usually kept up, a few well chosen crypto-communists were usually (Fierlinger) representing non-Communists.
4. Coup-d'etat the fourth phase and final phase sealed off the People's Democracies from the rest of the world.

"But while the working class movement is everywhere passing through what is practically the **SAME PREPARATORY SCHOOL FOR VICTORY** over the bourgeoisie, **IT IS IN EACH COUNTRY ACHIEVING this development in ITS OWN WAY.**"

from -- In Defense of the Communist Party and the Indicted Leaders -- W.E. Foster

APPENDIX III - Non-Violence

"Communists do not in the **LEAST idealize the methods of violence.** But they, the Communists, do not want to be **TAKEN BY SURPRISE**, they

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cannot count on the OLD WORLD VOLUNTARILY DEPARTING from the stage,
they see that the old system is violently DEFENDING ITSELF, and THAT IS
WHAT THE COMMUNISTS say to THE WORKING CLASS:

ANSWER VIOLENCE WITH VIOLENCE

DO ALL YOU CAN TO PREVENT THE OLD DYING ORDER FROM CRUSHING YOU

DO NOT PERMIT IT TO PUT MANACLES ON YOUR HANDS, ON THE HANDS WHICH
YOU WILL OVERTHROW THE OLD SYSTEM

(Stalin -- in an interview with H.G. Wells in 1934
Marxism versus Liberalism)

-11-

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